

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-56 (Canceled).

1 57. (New) A micro-dissection catheter for crossing vascular occlusions,
2 comprising:
3 a catheter shaft including a distal end and a longitudinal axis having at least one
4 lumen extending along the longitudinal axis of the catheter shaft;
5 an assembly at the distal end of the catheter shaft including at least one jaw, the
6 jaw comprising a free distal tip and an interior surface which continuously mates to a
7 component of the assembly, wherein the interior surface is atraumatic; and
8 an actuation assembly positioned along the catheter shaft, the movement of which
9 spreads the jaw and brings the free distal tip in contact with tissue of a blood vessel wall
10 and applies a force to the tissue that separates material of the vascular occlusion of the
11 blood vessel, wherein the jaw spreads by moving through an arc away from the
12 longitudinal axis of the catheter shaft with respect to a fixed pivotal position of a
13 proximal end of the jaw.

1 58. (New) The catheter of claim 57, wherein the interior surface of the jaw
2 accommodates a guidewire.

1 59. (New) The catheter of claim 57, wherein only an exterior surface of the
2 jaw contacts the tissue during spreading and subsequent closing of the jaw.

1 60. (New) The catheter of claim 57, wherein the material of the vascular
2 occlusion includes atherosclerotic plaque.

1 61. (New) The catheter of claim 57, wherein the assembly further includes a
2 fixed extension that extends to a common point concurrent with the free distal tip of the
3 jaw when in the closed position, and wherein the proximal end of the jaw is connected to

4 the fixed extension with a hinge pin to permit the free distal tip of the jaw to move away
5 from the fixed extension.

1 62. (New) The catheter of claim 57, wherein the assembly at the distal end of
2 the catheter shaft includes two jaws with each comprising a free distal tip and interior
3 surfaces that continuously mate, wherein the movement of the actuation assembly spreads
4 both jaws and brings the free distal tips in contact with tissue of a blood vessel wall and
5 applies a force to the tissue that separates material of the vascular occlusion of the blood
6 vessel.

1 63. (New) The catheter of claim 57, wherein the jaw includes an integrally
2 formed hinge.

1 64. (New) The catheter of claim 57, wherein at least one of the jaw and the
2 assembly include at least one component of a hinge

1 65. (New) The catheter of claim 57, wherein the jaw is coupled to the
2 assembly with at least one hinge pin to form at least one hinge that supports rotation of
3 the jaw via force applied to the actuation assembly.

1 66. (New) The catheter of claim 57, further comprising a guidewire conduit
2 formed along an external surface of the catheter shaft.

1 67. (New) The catheter of claim 57, further comprising a guidewire tube
2 extension defined by an outer surface positioned along at least a portion of the assembly
3 for enclosing a guidewire.

1 68. (New) The catheter of claim 57, wherein separating material of the
2 vascular occlusion includes at least one of fracturing the vascular occlusion, stretching
3 tissue of a vessel wall that includes the vascular occlusion to create a path between the

4 vascular occlusion and the tissue of the vessel wall, and stretching tissue of a vessel wall
5 that includes the vascular occlusion to create a path within the tissue of the vessel wall.

1 69. (New) A micro-dissection catheter for crossing vascular occlusions,
2 comprising:
3 a catheter shaft including a distal end and a longitudinal axis having at least one
4 lumen extending along the longitudinal axis of the catheter shaft;
5 an assembly at the distal end of the catheter shaft including at least one jaw, the
6 jaw comprising a free distal tip and an atraumatic interior surface, wherein the interior
7 surface forms a partially continuous mating with a component of the assembly; and
8 an actuation assembly positioned along the catheter shaft, the movement of which
9 spreads the jaw and brings the free distal tip in contact with tissue of a blood vessel wall
10 and applies a force to the tissue that separates material of the vascular occlusion of the
11 blood vessel, wherein the jaw spreads by moving through an arc away from the
12 longitudinal axis of the catheter shaft with respect to a fixed pivotal position of a
13 proximal end of the jaw.

1 70. (New) An intravascular catheter, comprising:
2 a catheter shaft including a distal end and a longitudinal axis having at least one
3 lumen extending along the longitudinal axis of the catheter shaft;
4 an assembly at the distal end of the catheter shaft including at least one deflecting
5 member, the deflecting member comprising a free distal tip, an exterior non-mating
6 surface, and an interior surface which mates to a component of the assembly, wherein the
7 deflecting member spreads by moving through an arc away from the longitudinal axis of
8 the catheter shaft with respect to a fixed pivotal position of a proximal end of the
9 deflecting member; and
10 an actuation assembly positioned along the catheter shaft, the movement of which
11 spreads the deflecting member to bring the exterior non-mating surface of the deflecting
12 member in contact with tissue of a blood vessel wall and applies a force to the tissue to
13 disrupt a vascular occlusion, wherein only the exterior non-mating surface of the

14 deflecting member contacts the tissue during spreading and subsequent closing of the
15 deflecting member.

1 71. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, wherein the interior surface
2 is continuous.

1 72. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, wherein the deflecting
2 member is atraumatic.

1 73. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, wherein the interior surface
2 includes a discontinuity that forms a guidewire lumen.

1 74. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, wherein the assembly is
2 formed with a guidewire lumen that extends to a distal end of the assembly.

1 75. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, wherein the assembly
2 further includes a fixed extension that extends to a common point concurrent with the
3 free distal tip of the deflecting member when in the closed position, and wherein the
4 proximal end of the deflecting member is connected to the fixed extension with a hinge
5 pin to permit the free distal tip of the deflecting member to move away from the fixed
6 extension.

1 76. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 75, wherein the assembly is
2 formed with a guidewire lumen that extends to a distal end of the fixed extension.

1 77. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, wherein the deflecting
2 member includes an integrally formed hinge.

1 78. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, wherein at least one of the
2 deflecting member and the assembly include at least one component of a hinge

1 79. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, wherein the assembly
2 includes a hinge that is separately formed and pivotally couples the deflecting member to
3 the assembly.

1 80. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, wherein the deflecting
2 member is coupled to the assembly with at least one hinge pin to form at least one hinge
3 that supports rotation of the deflecting member via force applied to the actuation
4 assembly.

1 81. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, further comprising a
2 guidewire conduit formed along an external surface of the catheter shaft.

1 82. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, further comprising a
2 guidewire tube extension defined by an outer surface positioned along at least a portion
3 of the assembly for enclosing a guidewire.

1 83. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, wherein disrupting the
2 vascular occlusion includes fracturing the vascular occlusion using the force generated by
3 the exterior non-mating surface of the deflecting member.

1 84. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, wherein disrupting the
2 vascular occlusion includes stretching tissue of a vessel wall that includes the vascular
3 occlusion using the force generated by the exterior non-mating surface of the deflecting
4 member, wherein the stretching creates a path between the vascular occlusion and the
5 tissue of the vessel wall.

1 85. (New) The intravascular catheter of claim 70, wherein disrupting the
2 vascular occlusion includes stretching tissue of a vessel wall that includes the vascular
3 occlusion, wherein the stretching creates a path within the tissue of the vessel wall.

1 86. (New) An intravascular catheter, comprising:

2 a catheter shaft including a distal end and at least one lumen;
3 an assembly at the distal end of the catheter shaft including at least one deflecting
4 member, the deflecting member comprising a free distal tip with an exterior non-mating
5 surface and a smooth atraumatic interior surface that mates with an interior surface of a
6 component of the assembly, wherein the deflecting member spreads by moving through
7 an arc away from the longitudinal axis of the catheter shaft with respect to a fixed pivotal
8 position of a proximal end of the deflecting member; and
9 an actuation assembly positioned along the catheter shaft configured to open and
10 close the deflecting member, wherein opening includes spreading the deflecting member
11 to apply a force to tissue of a blood vessel wall via the exterior non-mating surface of the
12 deflecting member in order to disrupt a vascular occlusion, wherein the smooth
13 atraumatic interior surface of the deflecting member deflects tissue from a space between
14 the interior surfaces of the deflecting member and the component during closing of the
15 deflecting member.

1 87. (New) A catheter system for use in blunt dissection, comprising:
2 a catheter shaft including a distal end;
3 a working element at the distal end of the catheter shaft including at least one
4 deflecting member configured for spreading, wherein the deflecting member includes a
5 relatively smooth interior surface and an exterior non-mating surface; and
6 an actuation assembly positioned along the catheter shaft and coupled to the
7 deflecting member to translate a force to tissue of a vessel wall exclusively via the
8 exterior non-mating surface for disrupting an occlusion in the vessel, wherein movement
9 of the actuation assembly controls the spreading of the deflecting member by moving a
10 free distal tip of the deflecting member through an arc away from the longitudinal axis of
11 the catheter shaft with respect to a fixed pivotal position of a proximal end of the
12 deflecting member to bring the exterior non-mating surface of the deflecting member in
13 contact with tissue of a vessel wall.

1 88. (New) A catheter system for use in blunt dissection, comprising:
2 a catheter shaft;

3 a working element at a distal end of the catheter shaft including at least one
4 spreading member, wherein the spreading member is configured to open and close, and
5 includes an exterior non-mating surface and a smooth interior surface; and
6 an actuation assembly positioned along the catheter shaft and coupled to the
7 spreading member to transfer a force to tissue of a vessel wall via the exterior non-mating
8 surface for disrupting an occlusion in the vessel, wherein the actuation assembly controls
9 the opening of the spreading member by spreading a free distal tip of the spreading
10 member through an arc away from the longitudinal axis of the catheter shaft relative to a
11 fixed pivotal position of a proximal end of the spreading member, wherein the interior
12 mating surface of the spreading member deflects tissue from a space between the interior
13 mating surface of the spreading member and a smooth interior surface of at least one
14 component of the working element during closing of the spreading member.